

Infection Precautions for Pregnant Women

How do I avoid getting ill while pregnant?

While not all illness may be preventable, the following measures can help to keep you, your unborn baby, and those around you healthier:

General Hygiene

Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. It is particularly important to wash your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After touching raw meat, raw eggs, or unwashed vegetables
- Before preparing food and before eating
- After gardening or touching dirt
- After handling pets
- After being around others who are ill
- After changing diapers
- After caring for anyone who is ill

Foods to Avoid:

- Raw milk and raw milk products
- Unpasteurized juices
- Soft cheeses such as Queso Fresco, camembert, brie, blue-veined cheeses
- Refrigerated smoked fish
- Refrigerated pates and meat spreads
- Undercooked eggs or egg products, such as over easy, raw cookie dough, etc.
- Raw salad sprouts
- Raw fish, seafood, poultry, or meat

Food Safety:

- Deli meats and hot dogs must be heated to a minimum temperature of 140°F
- Cook meats, fish and eggs until well done. Poultry must be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F or juices run clear
- Avoid any cooked foods that have been at room temperature for 2 hours or more
- Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly before preparing or consuming, including melons and avocados; thoroughly wash the exterior surfaces of all produce before cutting through the peel
- Maintain the internal temperature of your refrigerator at 41°F or less, and avoid overpacking with too much food
- Use separate cutting boards, knives and other utensils after preparing meats before handling and preparing fruits and vegetables
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces that have come into contact with raw meats, including counter tops, the kitchen sink, cutting boards etc. with a simple solution of bleach and water
**** Fill a quart size spray bottle of water with 1 teaspoon of plain, unscented bleach ****
- Avoid sharing eating utensils or drinking from the same containers as other people
- Discard unused and leftover foods within 4 days

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Hand washing steps:

1. Use soap and warm running water.
2. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds; use a nail brush.
3. Wash all surfaces:
 - Between fingers
 - Under fingernails
 - Back of hands
 - Wrists
4. Rinse well and dry hands with a clean paper towel.

Precautions for Pregnant Women (continued)

Animals:

- Do not touch or change dirty cat litter. Have someone else change it for you. If you must do so, wear gloves and wash your hands thoroughly afterward
- Wash your hands thoroughly after cleaning animal cages, picking up animal feces, or touching any animals
- Avoid any contact rodents and their droppings
- Keep all domestic animals updated on their vaccinations
- If you suspect your pet has been on food contact surfaces, clean and sanitize those surfaces

Vaccination Recommendations:

Vaccinations such as influenza and Tdap (preventative against Tetanus) are both recommended during pregnancy. It is best to ask your health care provider for further details.